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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 23 November 1992, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GANEV (Bulgaria)

later: Mr. ELHOUDERI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)
(Vice-President)

- Tornadoes in the United States of America
- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: fifth report of the General Committee [8] (continued)
- Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

  (a) Report of the Secretary-General

  (b) Draft resolution

/...

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- Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council [40]

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

TORNADOES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The PRESIDENT: Before turning to the first item on our agenda for this meeting, may I, on behalf of all the members of the Assembly, extend our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of the United States of America for the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage which have resulted from the tornadoes that recently struck the United States of America.

Mr. ROBINSON (United States of America): On behalf of my Government I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for your kind words of sympathy for the victims of the tornadoes in our country over the past weekend. The families of those who lost their loved ones and all those who were injured or have otherwise suffered in this catastrophe appreciate your concern. Thank you very much.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: FIFTH REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/47/250/Add.4)

The PRESIDENT: The fifth report of the General Committee (A/47/250/Add.4) concerns a request by a number of countries for the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item, entitled "Request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice".

The General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item be included in the agenda.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to include this additional item?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The General Committee also decided to recommend that this item should be allocated to the Sixth Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of the Sixth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken.

AGENDA ITEM 25

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/50 and Add.1)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/47/L.21)

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Turkey to introduce draft resolution A/47/L.21.

Mr. AKŞIN (Turkey): On behalf of the member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/47/L.21, dated 19 November 1992 and entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference". The objective of the draft resolution is further to strengthen and consolidate the fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Since its inception the Organization of the Islamic Conference has been fully dedicated to the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is natural that the two organizations should cooperate in promoting their common objectives of preserving peace and security and promoting social and economic development. We, the members of the OIC, remain convinced of the need for increased cooperation between our Organization and the United Nations in our common endeavour to achieve joint goals.

From the very outset the member States of the OIC visualized the role of the organization within the overall framework of the Charter of the United Nations. Our commitment to the United Nations Charter and to fundamental

(Mr. Akgin, Turkey)

human rights was explicitly reaffirmed in the Charter of the OIC. The Charter of the OIC underlined the determination of its member States to contribute to the attainment of progress, freedom and justice all over the world by promoting global peace and security.

In this spirit, the OIC has made consistent efforts to expand and consolidate cooperation with this world body ever since it obtained observer status in 1975. The United Nations has been represented at the OIC Ministerial Conferences and Summit Meetings by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General and sometimes by the Secretary-General himself. The efforts of the Secretary-General to broaden existing cooperation between our two organizations are highly appreciated by the Islamic community. In this context, I should like to express our gratitude to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for the excellent report he has submitted to the General Assembly (A/47/450 and Add.1) on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference". As the report underlines, the Organization of the Islamic Conference is developing a positive and constructive cooperation in various fields with the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system.

At all its meetings, including the Summit and ministerial-level conferences, the Organization of the Islamic Conference has adopted numerous resolutions on important global issues, such as disarmament, international peace and security, decolonization, the right of self-determination, human rights and economic and technological development, with a view to complementing the efforts of the United Nations in these areas. In pursuance of its deep commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the Charter of our own organization, the Conference has also taken a number of initiatives,

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

both within and outside the United Nations, for the promotion of peace and security. In this context I have the honour to inform member countries that the Organization of the Islamic Conference will hold the Sixth Extraordinary Session of its Foreign Ministers Conference, on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 1 and 2 December 1992.

The draft resolution which I have the honour to introduce today is similar to resolutions adopted under this item at previous sessions of the General Assembly. It represents the desire of the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference for greater cooperation with the United Nations in our common search for solutions to global problems.

In the preamble, the General Assembly stresses its conviction that the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference contributes to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and recognizes the need for closer cooperation between the United Nations system and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and its specialized institutions in the implementation of the proposals adopted at the coordination meeting of the focal points of the lead agencies of the two organizations.

In its operative paragraphs, the General Assembly, inter alia, expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his continued efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the United Nations system and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to serve the mutual interests of the two organizations in the political, economic and cultural fields. It requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to continue encouraging the convening of sectoral meetings in priority areas of

(Mr. Akşin, Turkey)

cooperation, such as the environment, disaster relief and science and technology, as recommended by the 1983 and 1990 meetings of the focal points of the two organizations, including the follow-up of the sectoral meetings. It also requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the state of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

It is our hope that this draft resolution, prepared by the member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, will meet with the Assembly's unanimous approval.

Before concluding I should like to take this opportunity to express the sincere thanks and appreciation of the member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the eminent Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his tireless efforts in strengthening cooperation between the two Organizations.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3369 (XXX), of 10 October 1975, I now call upon the Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. ANSAY (Organization of the Islamic Conference): I should like to associate myself with you, Sir, in your expression of sympathy to the people and Government of the United States of America over the terrible losses they suffered as a result of the recent natural disaster. At the same time I should like, on behalf of the General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to offer sympathy and condolences to the people and Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina for their tragic suffering resulting from an ongoing naked, brutal aggression of inhuman dimensions.

It is indeed a privilege for me to address the General Assembly on an agenda item of particular significance to the United Nations and the Organization that I represent - namely, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference".

Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the high office of the presidency of the General Assembly. Your election is a tribute to your personal qualities, to your experience and to your country. I assure you that

(Mr. Ansay, Organization of the Islamic Conference)

in the discharge of your responsibilities you can count on the full cooperation of my Organization.

I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ambassador Samir Shihabi, who not only served in an excellent manner as President of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, but provided an example of extraordinary leadership and brought additional respect to this institution.

I should like also to seize this opportunity to express our deep appreciation of the significant contribution made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to the effectiveness and smooth functioning of the world body. He has earned the gratitude and respect of all of us and of the international community by his new, reformative approach, humane attitude and deep understanding of global problems. His several achievements in the name of peace during a very short time speak for themselves. We wish him the best in the future, assure him of our utmost collaboration in the undertakings he has wisely initiated in the form of particular cooperation, relating to specific matters, between the United Nations and our Organization, and commend him for his excellent report (A/47/450 and Add.1).

I feel duty-bound in addressing the Assembly to extend once more to the Secretary-General our special thanks for facilitating the transportation of our delegation from Zagreb to Sarajevo last week, during the fact-finding mission that the Secretary-General of the OIC, Dr. Algabid, and I undertook in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia.

From the outset the members and the founding fathers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference clearly identified the role of our Organization

(Mr. Ansay, Organization of the Islamic Conference)

within the overall framework of the United Nations Charter. The Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference underlines the determination of its member States to make effective contributions to the enrichment of mankind and the achievement of progress, freedom and justice all over the world by promoting global peace and security.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference derives its inspiration from the eternal and noble message of Islam, and its establishment was predicated on the principles of peace, harmony, tolerance, equality and justice for all. The Charter of our Organization reaffirms the commitment of our members to the Charter of the United Nations. The perceptions of the members of our Organization, all of which are also Members of the United Nations, are identical to those of the vast majority of the United Nations membership on important international issues. It is only natural that the two Organizations should work closely to promote the ideals, principles and objectives that they share.

Since its inception in 1969 the OIC has adopted numerous resolutions and declarations, both at Summit level and at the level of meetings of Foreign Ministers, addressing the issues that confront the Islamic world, as well as important global developments relating to international peace and security, disarmament, human rights, minorities, decolonization and issues relating to socio-economic and technical development.

Cooperation between the two Organizations received an important boost in 1975, when the OIC was granted Observer status by the United Nations. By the late 1970s it was felt that the ever-increasing interaction of the two Organizations should be given an institutional framework whereby their Secretariats and specialized agencies, organs and bodies could hold regular

(Mr. Ansay, Organization of the Islamic Conference)

consultations to review their ongoing work and to examine the possibilities of expanding and enlarging the areas of their cooperation.

Since the adoption of resolution 35/36 of 1980 - the first resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC - our Organization has concluded a number of cooperation agreements with specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations bodies concerned with technical cooperation and development.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference has been mutually satisfactory and has been developing in a meaningful manner. Ever since the first meeting between the representatives of the Secretariats of the OIC and its specialized institutions and those of the United Nations system, which was held in 1983, the two Organizations have been collaborating on a number of important projects in the seven already identified priority areas of cooperation, which are discussed in the Secretary-General's report, dated 16 September 1992.

Within the framework of cooperation between the OIC and the United Nations, and in pursuance of resolution 46/13 of 1991 on cooperation between the two Organizations, during the course of this year the working group meeting on "Human Resources Development: Basic Education and Training" was held in Jeddah, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on 17 and 18 May 1992, and the meeting of the focal points of the lead agencies of the United Nations system

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and the OIC and its specialized agencies and institutions was held in Geneva from 27 to 29 October 1992.

At the same time, the ongoing in-the-field cooperation between our two Organizations relating to resolving the current tragic situation in Somalia is continuing, and I am happy to announce that last month the General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference inaugurated its second Permanent Observer mission to the United Nations - the mission in Geneva. Thus, with a permanent presence in Geneva, the OIC will be able to have even better cooperation with the whole United Nations system. The OIC Permanent Observer mission in Geneva is already taking an active part, as a member, in the meetings of the Steering Committee of the Geneva Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

In the meantime, let me assure the Assembly that the OIC is fully conscious of the financial constraints on both sides and that our cooperation process therefore takes that factor into account. As is customary, the 1993 cooperation meeting is subject to consultations, as to time and place, between the Secretaries-General of the two Organizations.

(Mr. Ansay, Organization of the Islamic Conference)

Draft resolution A/47/L.21, which was introduced by the Permanent Representative of Turkey, representing the current Chairman of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, reflects the firm determination of the two Organizations to go ahead and cooperate in several fields.

In the knowledge that there are no additional financial implications with regard to draft resolution A/47/L.21, I am confident that it will receive the unanimous approval of the membership of this body.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/47/L.21.

May I take it that the Assembly adopts draft resolution A/47/L.21?

Draft resolution A/47/L.21 was adopted (resolution 47/18).

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 25.

AGENDA ITEM 40

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT: In connection with this item, I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate be closed in one hour from now.

If I hear no objections, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names on the list as soon as possible.

Mr. GHAREKHAN (India): The debate this year on agenda item 40, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council", is taking place in an atmosphere marked

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

by expectation and anticipation. A large number of speakers in the general debate at this session have underscored the need for Security Council reforms which would take into account the increased membership of the United Nations and the changed international context in which the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, is called upon to play a more vigorous role in the maintenance of international peace and security. This, and the significant number of speakers inscribed for the debate on the present agenda item, is clearly indicative of the conviction of most Member States of the United Nations that the need for the revitalization and restructuring of the Security Council has become more urgent than ever before.

The agenda item was first considered by the General Assembly 13 years ago at its thirty-fourth session. The primary logic behind the initiative was that since 1963, when the decision was taken to increase the membership from 11 to 15 on the basis of the increase in the membership of the United Nations from 51 in 1945 to 113 in 1963, the membership of the United Nations had further increased considerably by 1979 and the Security Council, with its membership at 15, was not adequately representative of the membership of the Organization.

On grounds of numbers alone, the argument for enlargement of the Security Council membership has become even stronger today. In 1945, the ratio of the United Nations membership to the Security Council membership stood at 4.6. When the membership of the Council was increased to 15 as a result of the General Assembly decision in 1963, the membership of the United Nations was 113 and the ratio stood at 7.5. However, if the permanent seats are excluded and the ratios are compared only for non-permanent seats, the decline in representation of United Nations Members in the Security Council is even more

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

noticeable. The ratios for non-permanent membership in 1945 and in 1963, after the increase in the Security Council membership, were 7.7 and 10.8 respectively. In 1992, United Nations membership has gone up to 179. With the Security Council membership at 15, the ratio of United Nations membership to Security Council membership is 12 overall and 17.4 for non-permanent seats. Can one argue in this context, and given these numbers, that the Security Council, the principal organ for the maintenance of international peace and security, is representative enough to discharge its onerous responsibility in the expected transparent and democratic manner? The figures quoted above present an eloquent argument for the expansion of the Security Council.

However, the case for the restructuring and democratization of the Security Council is not merely related to numbers. It has gained strength because of the tremendous changes which have taken place in the world over the last few years. The end of the cold war and the breakdown of ideological barriers, have resulted in an increasingly active role for the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security for which the Charter assigns the primary responsibility to the Security Council. The Council is no longer fettered by the ideological wrangles of the past, and has begun over the past few years to play a more effective role in dealing with situations relating to peace and security. The prominent role for the Council requires, to a great degree, the trust and faith of the overall membership of the United Nations in the decisions taken by the Council. Such confidence in the functioning of the Security Council can be ensured only if it is more responsive to the expectations of the international community, takes greater cognizance of the changing realities in the world, displays transparency in

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

its decision-making process and, most importantly, reflects the views and aspirations of the overall membership of the United Nations. Such a proposition is possible only if there is more balanced representation for the Members of the United Nations in the Council.

Over the last few years, momentum has been gathering in the United Nations for restructuring and reform of many of its main organs so that the Organization can play a vibrant and energetic role in international affairs. The maintenance of international peace and security is one of its main functions and the Security Council has the primary responsibility in this field. Therefore, the need for restructuring the Security Council is even more urgent if the United Nations is to fulfil its promise of working for amity, justice and peace for all. It was only natural that more than 40 heads of delegation, while speaking in the general debate, called for reforms in the Council.

The Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace" has made several significant proposals regarding preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building, a large number of which call for an enhanced role for the Security Council. The effective implementation of these proposals in accordance with the principles, objectives and provisions of the Charter demands that the overall membership of the United Nations should unequivocally repose its faith in the Security Council decisions, and be willing to abide by these decisions without any reservations. This can be made possible only if the structure of the Council is more democratic and representative of the overall membership of the United Nations. As the Secretary-General himself has pointed out in his report on the work of the Organization,

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

"Democracy within the family of nations means the application of its principles within the world Organization itself". (A/47/1, para. 169)

My Prime Minister, speaking at the Security Council meeting at the level of Heads of State or Government, on 31 January 1992, put this issue in clear focus. Emphasizing that the actions by the Security Council must flow from the collective will of the international community, he said:

"As the composition of the General Assembly has trebled since its inception, the size of the Security Council cannot remain constant any longer. Wider representation in the Security Council is a must, if it is to ensure its moral sanction and political effectiveness." (S/PV.3046, p. 97)

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

The Minister of State of External Affairs of India, Mr. Faleiro, in his statement to the General Assembly on 25 September 1992 stressed the need for strengthening and revitalizing the Organization so that it could play a central role in the conduct of international relations. He said:

> "An enhanced mandate for the Council requires matching transparency and democracy in its functioning. This cannot be done without an expansion of the membership of the Council to reflect the increased membership of the United Nations over the past few years, as well as the realities of the many changes in the international situation ... along with economic criteria, other relevant criteria should be given due weight in this context." (A/47/PV.13, p. 41)

The collective view of the non-aligned countries was succinctly expressed in the call made by the Heads of State or Government in Jakarta earlier this year for a review of the membership of the Security Council with a view to reflecting the increased membership of the United Nations and promoting a more equitable and balanced representation of the United Nations.

An argument often advanced against an increase in the Security Council membership is that such an expansion would affect the Council's efficiency and effectiveness. The reality is otherwise. If the Council has been paralysed in the past it has been on account of ideological confrontation. Its size had nothing to do with its effectiveness or efficiency. We believe that a more representative Council will prove to be more efficient and effective since its decisions will have the support of the overall international community and carry much more weight.

My delegation wishes to pursue this objective in a spirit of promoting consensus on what we consider to be a question of great importance and

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

urgency. We are confident that the debate this year will begin the process of constructive, non-confrontational consultations among the Members of the United Nations on this crucial issue with the objective of collectively arriving at an exact understanding of the nature, extent and timing of the Security Council restructuring and expansion. For this purpose my delegation, along with those of many other like-minded countries, intends to introduce at this session a draft resolution seeking to promote an exchange of views among the Members before the next session of the General Assembly. We trust that all Members will be able to support such a draft resolution. Indeed, we would hope that it would be adopted by consensus without a vote.

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil): Last year, more than a decade after it was first included on the agenda of the General Assembly, the item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council" came out of its long period of hibernation. In the debate we had then in plenary meetings the Brazilian delegation had the opportunity to welcome that positive development, which it saw as a political consequence of the growing awareness among Member States of the need to deal with this important issue and to voice our support for carrying out open and frank discussions on it.

Over the past year proposals for reviewing the composition of the Security Council have multiplied and have received growing attention, not only from Governments but also from the press and academic institutions. A considerable number of delegations have referred to this question in statements made at the present session of the General Assembly, in the general debate in plenary meetings and in the main committees, a fact that bears additional witness to the timeliness of today's debate.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

The reasons for the growing interest in this question are not difficult to grasp. They have to do above all with the momentous changes that the international situation is going through and with the increasingly active role the Security Council is being called upon to play in the maintenance of international peace and security. Many of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) are good examples of the new tasks which might conceivably be entrusted to the Council. Due to the direct involvement of the Security Council in a constantly growing list of trouble spots in practically all regions of the globe, the world's attention is focused as never before on the work of the Council.

It is only natural that this increased attention and the acknowledged need for an even more effective Security Council have highlighted the fact that the time has come to address the question of ensuring that its composition properly represents the increased membership of the United Nations and at the same time is adequate to deal with the unprecedented challenges the United Nations must face in the changing world we live in today.

There is a clear correlation between a more appropriate composition of the Council and the improvement of its effectiveness, of its ability to accomplish the increasingly complex tasks being placed before it. A more representative and balanced composition will inevitably enhance the Council's authority.

We should not lose sight of the fact that - as stated in Article 24 of our Charter - it is on behalf of all the Members of the United Nations that the Security Council carries out its duties with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. This basic tenet should be taken as a

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

cornerstone for decisions regarding the future of the Council, in particular the decisions that sooner or later - sooner rather than later - will have to be made in relation to its composition.

At the 1989 session of the General Assembly Brazil referred at the highest level to the need for a re-examination of the adequacy of the composition of the Council, not only from the traditional standpoint of re-establishing a proper relationship between the number of seats and the total membership of the Organization, but also, and especially, in the light of the dramatic changes that were then beginning to take place in the international situation. Today we have passed the point of merely considering the desirability of holding a debate on the question of the composition of the Council.

Fully aware of the political sensitivity of the issue, we believe that the present international situation makes an increase in the Council's membership even more necessary. One can sense a widespread degree of agreement to that effect.

Our deliberations on this subject should be pursued with foresight and realism, but not without a sense of urgency. In this sense, there may be an appealing merit to the idea of having an enlarged Security Council installed by 1995 - the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

It has been argued that serious consideration of the question of the composition of the Security Council could conceivably bring about a Pandora's box of discussions on a series of other aspects of the Charter and should therefore be avoided. In our view this argument does not stand. Had the "Pandora's box" argument been invoked and accepted in 1963, the General Assembly would not have adopted resolution 1991 A (XVIII) and the Security Council would today still have only 11 members, as it had in 1945.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

The question of the composition of the Council should be considered on its own merits. There is clearly no need for it to be confused or linked with broader and much more complex and difficult issues related to the possible reform of other provisions of the Charter.

The question is politically important, but it is also procedurally very simple. All that is required is the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution by which it would adopt, as it did almost three decades ago, very specific amendments to Articles 23 and 27 of the Charter, which would then be subject to the ratification procedure provided for in Article 108.

The purpose of our debate today is to take stock of the support for the idea of reviewing the composition of the Council and to facilitate the process of deliberation and decision on the precise proposal to be submitted for adoption by a forthcoming session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

It has been suggested by Brazil and by a number of other countries that the number of permanent members of the Security Council should be increased to reflect better the overall membership of the United Nations and the changed international situation. It has also been suggested that an appropriate and measured increase in the number of non-permanent members of the Council should be provided for at the same time. We believe the time has come to discuss these proposals seriously and to fine-tune them. We also believe, as I mentioned before, that our objective should be to ensure that the composition of Council meets two related criteria: that it properly represents the increased membership of the United Nations and, at the same time, that it is adequate to face the unprecedented challenges the Council must deal with in our changing world.

It is a source of satisfaction that a substantive debate is now taking place on this subject in the General Assembly. We welcome every opportunity for dialogue on this timely question, which is of legitimate interest to all States Members of the United Nations. The adoption at this session of a draft resolution along the lines just mentioned by the representative of India will, we hope, open the way for a fruitful exchange of views on this issue, permitting us to focus on specific proposals for reviewing the composition of the Security Council. Brazil remains ready to participate in a constructive and positive spirit in future discussions on this important question.

Mr. GRAF ZU RANTZAU (Germany): Among the positive aspects of the end of the cold war was the ability of the United Nations to rid itself of the shackles of ideological and polemic debates and confrontations. In the process the United Nations has become an agent of hope for many, individuals and States alike. The United Nations will remain one of the centres of

(Mr. Graf zu Rantzau, Germany)

gravity of international politics provided we succeed in replacing ideological confrontation in every regard, including the North-South relationship, with cooperation and consensus.

The Security Council has manifested both its political resolve and its ability to act. A look at the trouble spots on our globe and at the relevant resolutions of the Security Council shows that the Council meets the primary responsibility assigned to it under the Charter for maintaining world peace and international security, by ensuring fast and effective action by the United Nations. Faced with ever-growing expectations, the Council will also have to assume in the future a key role in maintaining peace and stability in the world.

With its present structure and manpower, the United Nations has difficulty coping with the multitude of new tasks. Therefore, Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali in his "Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) submitted proposals to enhance the Organization's capacity to act. This will require each Member State to examine to what extent it is willing and able to shoulder increased responsibility in shaping United Nations policy. All of us are called upon to make more funds available to the Organization and jointly to tend new fields of cooperation.

Over recent years the United Nations has already begun to adapt its structures and to adjust them to the new realities of a changed international environment. My Government holds that all reform efforts must take into account the new reality of the forces of international politics. This process must appropriately involve those States which, on the basis of their political, economic and financial potential, can help the United Nations meet its increasing responsibilities in political decision-making and shoulder its growing burdens in terms of personnel as well as material and financial means.

(Mr. Graf zu Rantzau, Germany)

Supported by the majority of the Members of the United Nations, the Secretary-General has launched a reorganization of the Secretariat. The General Assembly has pondered its own role as well as measures to revitalize its work. For some time now a debate has been going on regarding a restructuring of areas such as economic and development policies, social questions and the environment, all of which have special significance for the future. Therefore, my delegation considers it a matter of course that views should also be exchanged on whether - and if so, which - measures are desirable to enhance the efficiency and credibility of the Security Council.

This question was addressed by my Foreign Minister in his statement to the General Assembly on 23 September this year:

> "The Security Council is the guardian of international peace. Its efficiency and credibility are of equal importance. A debate on reforming the Council is under way. We Germans will not take the initiative in this respect, but if a change in the Council's composition is actually considered we too shall make known our intention to seek a permanent seat." (A/47/PV.8, p. 59)

Important and complex decisions for the future of the United Nations are at stake. There are no magic formulas to answer the many questions facing us. All we can do in the present circumstances and realities is to look for a solution acceptable to the greatest possible number of States Members of the United Nations. We are confident that this end will best be served by a constructive and objective dialogue including the five permanent members of the Security Council - a dialogue that does not exclude any problem or any concern and that gives a say in the matter to all who desire it.

Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia): It is worth noting that this item on equitable representation on the Council and an increase in the membership was first introduced onto the agenda at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, 13 years ago. In all these years there has never been a substantive debate on the issue. Our debate on agenda item 40 this year marks a qualitative change, with direct bearing on the changed perspective and attitude that we now have about the Security Council. Before, even a few years ago, to attempt to examine the Security Council would expose one to criticism, to accusations of irresponsibly opening a Pandora's box or of disrupting a so-called winning team.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

Things are different now. The political leaders of over 40 countries spoke in the general debate this year about necessary change in the Security Council. The fabric of international relations is undergoing profound transformation. There is a widespread surge at all levels - national, regional and international - to look for new equations and structures to cope with global change. In this context, the United Nations, arguably the one universal system we have - albeit flawed and vulnerable - is also undergoing change and examination. The review and revitalization of the body that is now in progress is a reflection of this. The United Nations has to effect dynamic adaptation to the evolving realities in order that the United Nations system as a whole can be the focal point for the management of critical global issues of our time. As we examine the various bodies of the United Nations and relate them to the primary objectives and pursuits, it becomes undeniable that the Security Council too must change and adapt. This is especially so, given that the United Nations today has emerged from its past years of limbo to the enhanced status and influence it has now acquired.

It is to be welcomed that more and more countries, cutting across group or political affiliations, are pressing for changes in the Council. In essence, there cannot be any legitimate opposition towards change in the Council without inviting accusations of defending their own self-interest.

The reasons for an increased membership and equitable representation are obvious. The premises that brought about the structure of the Council in 1945 are no longer valid. The victorious Powers of 1945 are no longer pre-eminent Powers. Other new centres of power and influence, singly or in groups, have since emerged. There are new criteria for assessing global Powers and their interactions on international issues. Also, there are clear cases of

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

incompatibility between so-called political primacy and weakened economic conditions.

The bottom line is that the composition of the membership of the Council at any given instance must reflect the concerns of the vast membership of the world's community and, in this context, the present Council does not live up to that measure. The present Council no longer retains its representative character. The increase in the membership of the United Nations over the years has upset the ratio of the total number of States to the number of Council seats from 5 to 1 in 1945 to 8 to 1 in 1963, when the Council underwent its one and only restructuring, to 12 to 1 now in 1992. In other words, only 8 per cent of the general membership is now represented by the Council compared to 20 per cent in 1945, raising questions on the spirit and letter of Article 24 of the Charter in terms of the Council acting on behalf of the general membership and in terms of accountability.

At the same time, the current membership structure of the Council is also not consistent with Article 23 of the Charter. We are concerned that over the years, owing to the expansion of the United Nations membership, with new Members coming mainly from the developing countries, it has in fact distorted the distribution of the Council seats to the benefit of the industrialized countries. For instance, the ratio of the average number of countries in a region represented by one non-permanent seat in the Council reveals that currently the ratio is 22 to 1 for Asia; 17 to 1 for Africa and Latin America; 12 to 1 for Western Europe and others; and 10 to 1 for Eastern Europe. The industrialized countries in general, and Europe in particular, with the fusion of Western and Eastern Europe, are glaringly over-represented in the Council, holding four of five permanent memberships. Thus, given such a distorted and

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

inequitable geographical representation, the Council cannot be expected to represent and be on the side of the world's majority, attending to the problems of the world's majority.

To bring the distribution of the Council seats closer to regional representativeness, it is possible, for example, to consider enlargement of the non-permanent membership by an additional eight seats, of which three could be allocated to Asia, three to Africa and two to Latin America. This would provide an equity distribution ratio of 9 to 1 from these three regions. For the developing countries, this would also have the effect of balancing the current over-representation by industrialized countries. The above formulation is merely an example and a preliminary idea which requires deeper examination.

Also, the question of permanent membership and its veto power has to be closely examined. My delegation has always questioned the right of the Five to decide on behalf of the rest of the membership. We cannot accept the premises of 1945 to be perpetuated. We do not believe that the five permanent members now - even if we are to accept the concept of permanent membership - in any way fully represent all the world's power centres. Then again, what constitutes the equation of power in the context of the new realities? If the Security Council is to be the nucleus for a collective world authority with increasing powers of enforcement in all the aspects contained in Chapter VII of the Charter, there must be a reordering of what constitutes eligibility for permanent membership in the future. At the same time, my delegation finds it difficult to accept that the way out is to have more permanent members or the idea of establishing a third category of membership, as permanent members without the veto or as semi-permanent members electable for a period of five

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

to six years without the right of veto. We can study and deliberate over these ideas but, basically, the Security Council of the future cannot be a body wherein reside countries that claim political primacy.

The present structure of the Council provides many grounds for complaint by the non-permanent members of the Council. Malaysia, as a member in 1989 and 1990, experienced this and so have many Council members from the developed countries. We acknowledge that there have been many responsible decisions taken by the Council in recent years that have enhanced the status of the United Nations and the Council, but this does not mean that the Council should resist change. Also, it is a well-known fact that there have been many decisions which have been the result of pressures and railroading by a powerful few arrogating unto themselves the right to decide on behalf of others. It is time to reject collectively the idea of an élite group continuing to decide exclusively on critical issues that affect peace and security. The programme for the future as described in "An Agenda for Peace" cannot be fully undertaken with a Security Council that neither commands the confidence of the majority nor is drawn equitably from the general majority.

The Malaysian delegation would not be content with the process ending with the enlargement of the Council only. We hope that eventually the process of enlargement of the Council will be accompanied by a close and objective scrutiny of the rules of procedure and functioning of the Council in order to address some of the tendencies, behaviour and practices which run counter to the norms and principles of accountability, transparency and democracy. Our goal should be to reform the Council as a part of the process of revitalization and restructuring of the United Nations.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

In this regard, efforts should be directed towards finding a formula that allows for a suitable interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and for the Council to take due account of the views of the general membership. The future credibility and success of the Council in discharging its duties will ultimately depend on a harmonious relationship between the Council and the general membership as represented in the General Assembly.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

The task before us is not going to be easy. Nevertheless, the Security Council, like other organs, should adapt to changing circumstances in order to enhance its credibility, moral authority and overall acceptability. The evolving international situation and the increasing crucial role of the Council make it imperative that we view our consideration of the agenda item before us as a very serious exercise, one requiring urgent attention and aimed at working towards concrete action, preferably by 1995, when the international community will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

We are not out to ruin the Council and the good work that it has done. Our approach to changes in the Council will be objective, progressive and balanced. The draft resolution being submitted by delegations, including Malaysia, for the Assembly's approval takes this approach. We believe our insistence on change is well supported by those outside the United Nations. The informed public, academicians and non-governmental organizations are looking into the United Nations and examining all aspects of the system, including the Security Council. We who represent the developing countries, the world's majority, can apply tremendous pressure for changes in the Council that cannot be ignored.

Mr. TRAXLER (Italy): In the changed international climate in which we are living the United Nations will have a greater responsibility and will, therefore, need still greater authority to carry out the fundamental tasks which, in the various fields, have been assigned by the Charter.

To live up to the challenges of the new era we should not exclude in principle the possibility of restructuring some important organs of the universal body if it appears that by means of such restructuring the United Nations will be given more effectiveness to perform its mission. Hence, the

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

usefulness of the present debate on an equitable representation and a possible increase in the membership of the Security Council, which, as recent and current events prove, has a unique role in maintaining international peace and security.

During the general debate at this session Italy and other countries have already stated that the question of a possible revision of the Charter concerning the composition of the Council deserves careful consideration. We believe that the Council could be made even more authoritative and representative by increasing the number of non-permanent and permanent members, choosing the latter possibly on the basis of such objective criteria as size of a country's population, gross national product, contribution to the United Nations budget and so on.

The Security Council was first expanded in 1963 to take account of the increase in the number of Member States. Since then there has been a further substantial increase in United Nations membership, which has risen from 112 to 179 countries, an increase of roughly 60 per cent. This factor, in itself, would appear to warrant an expansion of the decision-making body of the Organization. Since it is required to make choices of major importance the Security Council should adapt to the evolution of the world community. At the appropriate time Italy too will assert its aspirations to a more adequate representation in that body - unless, of course, institutional developments in the European Union will not allow, at a certain stage, for the institution of a "European seat" on the Council.

What needs to be preserved are the aims of the Charter, which continue to be not only valid but also essential. But in a world that is now quite different from the world of 1945 and whose transformation began to accelerate

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

in 1989, it would be unthinkable to suggest that we should avoid taking speedy and courageous action to devise new instruments, change our thinking and, possibly, review the membership and composition of the Council. Only by maintaining a fruitful polarity between permanent goals and new instruments, to which we must all contribute, will we be able to meet the challenges of our times.

For all those reasons, Italy approves the spirit and content of the draft resolution that will be introduced this year under this agenda item.

Mr. GALAL (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): The past few years have witnessed tremendous international changes which, in depth and scope, have surpassed the imaginings of the most imaginative of political thinkers. Hence the compelling need to reconsider a great many dictums of accepted wisdom and formulate new principles that would correctly reflect the new realities of international relations. The first aspect of the change is the international détente that has emerged in the context of the United Nations, and particularly in the context of the Security Council. We cannot but wonder whether that détente is transient or a firm solid fact in the life of the international Organization.

The second aspect is the outbreak, in regions which had been quiescent and conflict-free for more than four decades, of conflicts that have intensified and deepened to such an extent that the parties involved have been compelled to fall back on historical, geographical and even religious facts in their search for corroboration for their views.

The third aspect has been the increasingly pronounced role of regional international organizations in the context of their search for coordination with the United Nations in working for political settlements that would lead to the establishment and maintenance of peace.

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

There is no question that even a cursory glance at the conflicts now raging in the former Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union and in Africa, especially in Somalia and Liberia confirm what I have just said.

In this new international environment, the role of the Security Council has grown and is no longer limited to the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, as stipulated by Article 24 of the Charter. The Security Council's role has extended beyond those limits to embrace peace-building, the protection of human rights and the provision of humanitarian relief assistance. The Council's resolutions concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Cambodia, Angola, are all excellent examples of this enhanced role.

While the Council's tasks have evolved, and its responsibilities have become diversified, the Council's membership has not changed regardless of the fundamental changes that have taken place on the international arena.

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

Consequently, the Council's membership, as it stands now, falls short of truly reflecting those fundamental changes, especially with regard to the role of regional Powers. It is therefore necessary to take another look at the size of the Council's membership and the manner in which its members are chosen, so that its composition may reflect the true political realities and the effective role of regional Powers and so that the Security Council may become a truly democratic organ whose activities would be the end result of the interaction between the thinking and the volition of the various cultures and regional groupings that constitute the international community.

The item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council" was placed on the agenda of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session in response to the wishes of a number of developing countries. This year, however, we find that this is not the wish of those countries alone, but the wish of many developed countries as well. In other words, it has become a universal will and not just a limited wish. In statements in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly, we have heard eloquent testimony to this fact. In other words, the universal will is in favour of reviewing the composition of the Security Council with the aim of broadening it, strengthening its role and enhancing its effectiveness so that it can become a true reflection of the hopes of all Members of this international Organization.

We need not recall the provisions of Article 24 of the Charter, under which Members of the United Nations agreed to confer on the Security Council the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agreed that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility, the Security Council acts on their behalf. While it may have been logical for 15 Member

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

States to work on behalf of 113 in 1963, that limited membership is no longer appropriate or adequate now that the membership of the United Nations stands at 179 States.

In January 1992, the Secretary-Generalship of the Organization was conferred upon a man whose dynamism, courage and decisiveness in decision-making is recognized by all. Also in January of this year the, first Summit Meeting of the Security Council was held, and at that Summit it was requested that a report be prepared in order to seek means of strengthening the role of the Security Council in all its aspects. The Secretary-General published his report in "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277). That plan has generated considerable interest and has continued to be the subject of intense debate, not only here in the halls of the Organization but also in different specialized research institutes, the ministries of different countries and schools of international law, because of the many ideas and proposals it contains.

The discussion of the development, revitalization and strengthening of the role of our international Organization and its various organs is an ongoing process that aims at meeting the growing aspirations of Member States. Therefore, the revitalization of many provisions of the United Nations Charter has been going on for years.

At this point, I should like to say that the first paragraph of Article 23 of the Charter stipulates that when members of the Security Council are elected, account needs to be taken, first and foremost, of the contribution of those Members to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and, secondly, of equitable geographical distribution. There can be no doubt that the freezing

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

of the composition of the Security Council not only undermines the principle of equitable geographical distribution but also deprives certain States and cultural regions of their right to participate fully in the decision-making process in that principal organ of the United Nations, which is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Those States have been deprived of membership on the Council, and the interval between terms of office on the Council in the case of some countries has extended to 42 years.

Since its inception, the United Nations has seen growing appeals for more equitable representation on the Council, and Egypt, one of the pioneers in the movement of non-aligned countries and the development of its principles, has played a primary role in this respect, not only on the basis of its regional foreign-policy role in the African-Muslim world but also on the basis of its varied interests, the importance it attaches to dealing with world issues and its role in the creation of civilization and in laying the foundations of peace for millennia. That is why my delegation is a sponsor of the resolution before the General Assembly and why we appeal to all States to adopt it unanimously so that it may express the new positive will which inspires the international community and moves it towards ensuring a better future in which the principles of freedom, justice, democracy and peace would prevail.

We feel that the request to broaden the membership of the Security Council is consonant with the principles of justice and reason. It is a request that will lead to an increase in the number of participants in the decision-making process, which in turn will have a positive effect on the credibility of the Council, the effectiveness of its resolutions and the respect of all Members for those resolutions, since States will have been full participants in their adoption. The current limited membership of the Council

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

gives the impression that the Council's resolutions do not reflect the will of the international community as a whole but rather the will of the few, which means that the Security Council, with its current composition, is less democratic at a time when democracy is the watchword for all countries the world over.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): Since the discussion of this agenda item at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the question of the composition, functions and other aspects of the Security Council has become a matter of central interest to the entire membership of the United Nations. In the Security Council Summit Meeting in January this year Prime Minister Miyazawa, noting that certain sections of the United Nations Charter are based on realities prevailing in 1945, stated that it was necessary for the United Nations to evolve while adapting to a changing world. In this context he made a particular reference to the Security Council. In the course of the general debate this year many countries have raised this issue, with some delegations presenting very specific views on it.

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

It is a subject in which Japan is profoundly interested. The Security Council is at the centre of United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security, and it will have to play an increasingly crucial role in the years ahead. In his statement to the General Assembly this September, Foreign Minister Watanabe said that he wondered whether some of the United Nations bodies, as currently organized, could effectively meet the rising expectations of the international community. He stressed that it was necessary for the United Nations to

> "reshape itself in response to the epochal changes that we have recently witnessed - changes that could not have been foreseen when the Organization was founded",

adding:

> "These include the rapid transformations in the international situation, the dramatic increase in United Nations membership and shifts in global power relations." (A/47/PV.7, p. 67)

Thus he called upon the United Nations to begin to deal with this issue in order to strengthen its functions, particularly with the aim of enhancing trust in and the effectiveness of the Security Council.

It is clear to us all that the discussion has become increasingly intense since this issue was debated at the last session of the General Assembly, and particularly since the Security Council Summit Meeting in January. It seems to me, however, that the arguments presented by Member States represent a wide range of opinion. Thus the time is ripe for us to engage in a serious discussion to find an answer on this issue.

Japan regards it as crucially important that Member States examine further how the Security Council can be strengthened and restructured. I

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

should like to suggest that in order to focus our efforts we bear in mind the following points.

First and foremost, it is essential that we try to establish among Member States, through cooperative discussions and a constructive attitude, common ground as to the present operation of the Council and its future functions. Confrontation is not what we want.

Secondly, we must consider all relevant factors. These discussions will address, inter alia, the changing international circumstances, the changing concept of security, the contributions of Member States to realization of the purposes of the Charter, equitable geographical distribution and the effectiveness and credibility of the Council.

Thirdly, it is important that our efforts be conducted in a practical and effective manner. In this context, Japan supports the proposal that the Secretary-General be requested to invite Member States to submit written comments, and we hope that as many Member States as possible will join the process by actively responding to his invitation.

In addressing the need to restructure the Council, we must ensure that it will remain truly effective in coping with the challenges it faces and that this function will even be strengthened. I should like to point out, in this regard, that United Nations activities in the area of peace and security are becoming ever more complex and wide-ranging. The threats facing the international community today are not all purely military; indeed, civil strife and threats of a non-military nature are becoming increasingly serious. Thus Japan believes that, in addition to having its ability to cope with traditional threats in a more effective manner enhanced, the Security Council should be enabled to respond to new kinds of threats to peace and security. I

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

believe that the effectiveness of the Council will be measured to no small degree by its response to these new challenges.

In recent years the Security Council has been effective in making timely decisions, but it is equally important for the Council to ensure that its decisions are fully and effectively implemented. To this end, the Security Council should bear in mind that the United Nations must be able to make full use of the resources - in terms of personnel, financing and know-how - made available to it by Member States.

Japan would like to see a Security Council that is well equipped to respond to the changing dynamics of the international arena. This will require that the composition of the Security Council - I am referring to permanent as well as non-permanent seats - be adjusted to accommodate the world's new and changing realities.

It is time for the entire United Nations membership to engage in a truly meaningful discussion. Japan is ready to take an active part. I believe that 1995 - the year of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary - will be an important juncture in this process.

Mr. ELHOUDERI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): The Security Council and its functioning have long been the focus of attention of United Nations Member States. The debate and the exchange of views in the General Assembly on this item reflect this interest. They reflect also the continued concern and the renewed call for adapting the United Nations organs to the realities of a greatly altered international situation.

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Over the past few years, two attempts have been made to increase the membership of the Security Council. The first attempt took place during the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, when a proposal was put forward to increase the number of non-permanent members to 14. The second attempt was at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 1980, at which time my country co-sponsored a draft resolution that called for increasing Security Council membership to 21. The motive behind both attempts was the desire to rectify the non-democratic nature of the Security Council's membership, which has failed to adequately reflect the increase in the United Nations membership as it stood then. It was considered necessary to review the composition of the Security Council and make it more balanced.

This position, which was taken by many countries, including my own, 13 years ago, has been and continues to be a top priority for us, for reasons which we have advanced on previous occasions and which we would like to reiterate here today, namely the following:

First, the need to democratize the composition of the Security Council so that it may truly and equitably reflect the composition of the General Assembly, whose membership has considerably increased since the United Nations Charter was last amended and the Security Council's membership was raised to 15.

Secondly, under the current international circumstances, the Security Council has come to play a principal role in almost all international questions by taking positions and adopting resolutions. These resolutions, which are extremely important and far-reaching in their impact on all Member States, cannot be satisfactory unless they are adopted through a wider

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

participation in a Security Council which is more representative of the family of nations.

Thirdly, other organs of the Organization have either amended their structures and statutes or are in the process of doing that in order to respond more fully to the new demands of a new international situation. It is not at all appropriate for the Security Council not to take these developments into account or for the composition of the Council, an organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, not to reflect the true situation of the United Nations membership and not to express the overall orientation of all the Organization's Member States.

We fully subscribe to the view that to increase the Security Council's membership is to increase the Council's efficiency and efficacy, as such an increase will democratize the Council and guarantee support by all United Nations Member States for the resolutions it adopts. In addition, it is my delegation's view that the Security Council's efficacy would be ensured by the respect of all of the Council's members for the provisions of the Organization's Charter, especially its Article 27. Furthermore, this efficacy would be greatly enhanced if the Council adheres to clarity in its resolutions and bases those resolutions on clear evidence and unambiguous proof after the widest possible consultation, especially with the States concerned. We are also of the view that the Council's efficiency will be greatly enhanced if some of the rules governing its work are reviewed, such as the power of veto, which is no longer justified. This power of veto was granted almost half a century ago under circumstances which greatly differed from those pertaining today. Experience has shown clearly that the use of the power of veto has not helped efforts aimed at solving disputes and strengthening international

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

security. It has, in fact, impeded the proper performance of the role entrusted to the Security Council, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. The cases in which the power of veto has been used, since the establishment of the United Nations, show that in most cases the power of veto was used to defend special interests and not to uphold international principles or to address international issues. We do not forget that the new tendency in the Security Council has made it possible to adopt many of its resolutions by consensus. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that there is no guarantee whatsoever that this tendency will continue, especially if a member with the power of veto becomes party to a dispute that is brought to the Council for consideration.

In conclusion, my delegation should like to stress once again that increasing the Security Council's membership is an important and urgent need, for the reasons I have just mentioned and for the other reasons raised by other participants in this debate. At the same time, we must emphasize that it is extremely important to enhance the efficacy of the Security Council through the adoption of necessary measures, including a review of the privilege of the power of veto. The present time is characterized by the expanding scope of the tasks and burdens of the United Nations and by the enormous importance of the issues it deals with. This is also an era in which the international community has started trying to redress the imbalances in the international system and to lay down new foundations for that system so that its underpinnings may be justice, democracy and equality between all States. We believe that these goals will not be achieved so long as the fate of the whole world remains tied to the interests of the States that enjoy the

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

power of veto or to the will of one State which may see fit to use that power of veto to prevent the adoption of any draft resolution before the Council.

Mr. MUMBENGEGWI (Zimbabwe): Paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter describes the relationship between the general membership of the Organization and the Security Council in the following terms:

> "In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf."

This clearly raises the question of representativity. The Members of the United Nations, under Article 25,

> "agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter."

This clearly raises the question of legitimacy.

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

The Members of the Organization can accept and carry out those decisions only if they regard themselves as being equitably represented in the Security Council. It is important, therefore, that the composition of the Security Council reflect both equity and representativeness at all times if it is to maintain the prestige and credibility that are so essential if its decisions are to carry enough weight to tilt the balance in conflict situations towards peace and harmony.

Zimbabwe believes that we have now reached that threshold, in terms both of equity and of representativeness, where, unless urgent steps are taken to rectify the situation, we really run the risk of finding ourselves in a situation where decisions of the Council lack both prestige and moral authority. It is this consideration that gives the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council both urgency and importance.

This agenda item addresses two important elements: equitable representation and increase in membership. These are two separate elements which have to be addressed together if the composition of the Council is to be more democratic.

I shall start with the second element. It will be recalled that a decision to increase the membership of the Security Council was taken in 1963 and came into force two years later, in 1965. Since the non-permanent membership of the Council was increased from 6 to 10 some 29 years ago, the general membership of the United Nations has grown from 113 to 179. This phenomenal increase in membership constitutes the most compelling argument for an increase in the membership of the Security Council. In statistical terms the general membership represented in the Security Council has deteriorated

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

from 20 per cent in 1945 through 12.5 per cent in 1963 to the present 8 per cent. This state of affairs must be rectified, particularly, as we have already noted, since the Council is supposed to be acting on behalf of Member States.

I turn now to the question of equitable representation. Three aspects need to be addressed: the aspect of the geographical distribution of the membership, the aspect of permanent membership and the aspect of the veto. There can be no doubt that the composition, the distribution of seats and the distribution of power and influence in the Security Council reflect the reality of the world in 1945. That should be no surprise. Every generation has the duty and obligation to put in place mechanisms and arrangements that reflect its own reality. It would be surprising, therefore, if the generation of the post-cold-war era failed to restructure such a vital and important organ as the Security Council to reflect the present-day reality.

And present-day reality is that the geographical distribution of the membership has become grossly inequitable and the configuration of the permanent membership of the Council and its attendant veto have become thoroughly outmoded.

In 1963 the average statistical waiting period for a country in the Asian group of countries was one and a half times longer than for its counterparts in the European region. In 1992 that waiting period has deteriorated to two and a half times longer. Clearly this state of unequal access to membership of the Security Council cannot be allowed to continue unrectified, bearing in mind that the question of international peace and security is the concern of all Member States.

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

The question of the permanent membership of the Security Council also needs to be carefully examined to determine whether it is as desirable today as it was in 1945. If it is found to be still desirable, then the equitability of the present allocation arrangements has to be examined. The criterion in 1945 appears to have been the desire to reward the victorious alliance of the 1939 to 1945 war. Shall the same criterion apply in the post-cold-war era? If so, who are the victors to be rewarded? Those are some of the questions that we have to face as we consider the issue of equitable representation.

The question of the veto also needs close scrutiny. Is it still necessary and desirable in the post-cold-war era? If it still is, does it have to continue to be tied to the question of permanent membership? If it is retained, can mechanisms be developed to make its exercise subject to regional or geographical considerations so as to make it more representative and more equitable?*

It is clear that we are now entering an era where the Security Council will increasingly be called upon to resolve disputes internationally, including those which in that bygone era would have been regarded as being of purely domestic concern. It was no doubt in appreciation of this reality that the Tenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, held in Jakarta last September, called

"... for a review of the membership of the Security Council with a view to reflecting the increased membership of the United Nations and

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* Mr. Elhouderi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

promoting a more equitable and balanced representation of the Members of the United Nations."

Let us not forget that this is a call from a gathering of 108 Members of this Organization meeting at the highest level. Such a call can be ignored only at the peril of the United Nations.

Mr. MONTAÑO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Outlining his vision of an agenda for peace in the tenth and last chapter of the report requested by the Security Council at its Summit Meeting of 31 January 1992, the Secretary-General states:

"Never again must the Security Council lose the collegiality that is essential to its proper functioning, an attribute that it has gained after such trial." (A/47/277, para. 78)

The work of this important organ, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali goes on, must be governed by a

"genuine sense of consensus deriving from shared interests ... not the threat of the veto or the power of any group of nations." (A/47/277, para. 78)

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

Indeed, one of the positive outcomes of the end of the cold war has been the opportunity the Security Council has regained to discharge the mandate assigned to it by the drafters of the San Francisco Charter. After four and a half decades of vicissitudes which impeded its work and prevented harmony among its members, the Council has in the past three years resumed its proper role in the maintenance of international peace and security. Today more than ever before, the Security Council is simultaneously a forum of and a central actor in world events.

At first sight, this should be a source of satisfaction to all Member States. As a forum acting on behalf of us all, in conformity with Article 24 (1) of the Charter, it would deserve the support and gratitude of the States represented here, if it were felt that collective interests were duly represented within it. Nevertheless, such is not the reality, and herein lies the source of the concern that motivates this debate and underlies consideration of the draft resolution submitted to this Assembly, which my delegation has the honour of co-sponsoring.

To state the matter very clearly, we consider that the absence of equitable representation diminishes the representativeness of the Council and brings it into conflict with the central provision of the Charter, which is the Council's raison d'être. Indeed, the Charter states that

> "In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security". (Article 24 (1))

Within this mandate, the Charter states that Members recognize that the Council acts on their behalf in carrying out its duties under that

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

responsibility, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. There can be no doubt, then, that a constitutional link exists between the primary function of the Security Council and the capacity in which the Council discharges that function.

As the Council ceases to be genuinely representative, the legitimacy with which it acts on behalf of us all is eroded. But clearly, too, the existence of an organ that can discharge its important mandate in a "prompt and effective" manner is a matter of concern to us all. Consequently, the initiation of a broad and far-reaching revision of the composition of the Security Council is fully justified and necessary.

Figures can be quoted that clearly demonstrate the alarming decrease in the representativeness of the Council since its last expansion in 1963, given the increase in the number of Members of the Organization by more than half. Consequently, the Security Council today represents a very limited fraction of all the Members.

It can also be pointed out that, with the passage of time and the increase in the universality of the United Nations, the opportunity to participate in the Security Council becomes increasingly rare, and this also detracts from another fundamental principle of the Charter, namely, the sovereign equality of States before the law. The inevitable result of this situation is that a few States repeatedly participate in the work of the Council and that the majority, particularly small countries, see the possibilities of their participation reduced. This pertains, of course, to the status of non-permanent members.

In the debate on this subject that took place at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, my delegation suggested that there was a need to

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initiate an analysis of the composition of the Council, without prejudging the outcome that might be reached. From our viewpoint, there are already a large number of serious and constructive proposals that merit detailed consideration by all Members. The delegation of Mexico considers that this analysis should focus first on the objectives we are pursuing, before seeking specific formulas to permit the attainment of those goals.

The situation as it stands is much more serious than one of mathematical proportions. The problem is in essence a political one. It is certainly noteworthy that, at a time when sweeping changes are taking place on the international scene, when we are witnessing the dawn of an international order with unprecedented characteristics, and when we are proposing radical reforms of the United Nations to enable it to respond adequately to these new circumstances, the Security Council should remain immutable. Clearly, this is not a matter of change for the sake of change. But neither can one doubt that the world situation has outstripped the Council's capacity to respond adequately to the new challenges.

Mexico, no doubt along with many other countries, is concerned that the ability of the United Nations to turn into a reality the "opportunity regained" referred to by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization would be severely reduced in so far as the Security Council loses its capacity for rapid and effective action, is overwhelmed by the proliferation of situations in the world that call for its action and its attention and, consequently, loses its legitimacy as its representativeness is called into question.

The first criterion, then, for carrying out a revision of the composition of the Security Council is to seek to revitalize that body for the benefit of

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the United Nations and all its Member States. Our desire for change is motivated by a positive approach: how can the Security Council be adapted so that it is transformed into an organ capable of discharging its mandate in the context of the new international realities?

A second criterion is that of returning to the spirit and letter of the Charter's statement that the Council acts on behalf of all Members. We need to ask ourselves if the present size of the Council is truly representative, or whether its membership needs to be expanded. Purely mathematical proportions alone tend to favour the second option, but we do not discount the possibility of undertaking an internal reorganization that would lead to a redistribution of the composition of its membership so as to reflect more accurately the political geography of our times.

There will be those who focus on the fact that a larger Council will be a more cumbersome organ, slow and incapable of responding adequately to the demands made of it. This is an easy argument and not one of substance. Nevertheless, the current situation also provokes similar thoughts. No one is unaware that the Council's capacity to deal with the many and complex requests constantly made of it has become overloaded. It has even been stated that the Council has placed on the margin the consideration of some situations in order to enable it to deal with others. Obviously, it is difficult to set priorities between one conflict and another, since they all merit the same treatment and consideration. Consequently, we need to approach with an open mind the possibility of changing the size of the Security Council.

We further consider that the possibility of changes in the Council's internal structure should also be explored. The world has changed, and so has the political configuration of the geographical regions. Today there is no

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proportionality in the Security Council either in strictly geographical terms or in political terms. Quite simply, the group of countries making up the great region of Europe and other States provides the majority of Council members. Obviously, the fact that the other three regional groups share less than half of the available seats constitutes, to say the least, an imbalanced situation, particularly when taking into account the levels and proportions in terms of population.

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A further reason that should be borne in mind relates to the responsibility of members of the Council. Here again, it needs to be asked whether the Security Council, and particularly its permanent members, adequately reflect the power centres of world politics. Do the five countries which, for a very specific reason, acquired this privilege in 1945, continue to have the same type of responsibility and political capacity? Are there not today new centres of power which deserve access to this type of membership?

In a broader sense, the point needs to be made that the very concept of power in the modern world is sufficiently different from that of 1945 to justify a revision. From our standpoint, we believe that in recent decades new centres of power, and even new criteria for evaluating the scope and nature of their influence in international politics, have emerged. All of this leads us to think about whether the membership of the Council meets the criteria of special responsibility and legal equality of States as an indivisible pairing which gives legitimacy to its actions.

We consider that any change in structure and size would be purely cosmetic unless certain procedural concerns were also met. The power of veto and the countries that hold it, the transparency of the Council's proceedings and decisions and the responsibility of the Council to the General Assembly in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter are issues which also should be analysed in order to find a formula which satisfies all Member States. The problem goes beyond, for example, who holds the power of veto and whether some regulation of it would be desirable. The issue is whether, regardless of the rules that apply, there is a guarantee that the provisions of the Charter will not be modified in practice, thus infringing the rights of all Member States. To recall once again the words of the Secretary-General,

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the work of the Security Council must be governed by a genuine sense of consensus derived from shared interests. Ensuring that the Council's decisions adequately reflect those shared interests is, in the final analysis, the central task for which we bear responsibility to future generations.

The draft resolution to be submitted for consideration by the Assembly is framed in the purest of democratic traditions. Its aim is to ascertain the opinion of all Member States on this important issue through a process of consultation conducted by the Secretary-General. The outcome of these consultations will of itself be an important achievement for the United Nations in stimulating reflection and analysis. We are sure that ultimately all Member States will benefit to the extent that we succeed in making the Security Council adapt to the new realities. The Council will benefit and consequently so will the States that have placed in it our trust for the maintenance of peace and security and for the maintenance of the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention.

Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia): In recent years the international community has witnessed profound change and transition and has brought to the fore the central role of the United Nations as the unique framework to deal with issues of global interest. Consequently, there is a widespread expectation that the Organization can now fulfil the primary objectives in the Charter: the maintenance of international peace and security and the economic and social development of all nations. This new resurgence of multilateralism has opened up new opportunities for the Organization, especially for the Security Council.

Concurrently, Member States have articulated the need for a restructuring of the United Nations mechanism as well as appropriate balance among its

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various bodies in conformity with their respective mandates as enshrined in the Charter. In this context, my delegation has welcomed the ongoing endeavours to reform and improve certain structures and procedures of the Organization as an essential component to strengthen multilateralism so as to ensure equal participation and balanced representation. In these endeavours the main objective is to render the Organization more responsive to the changing realities and emerging challenges of peace and development through the democratization of international political and economic institutions.

My delegation has consistently maintained that this multilateral Organization should reflect the democratic spirit of equality, equity and transparency, in representation as well as in decision-making processes. Hence the United Nations and its principal organs should periodically undergo a process of review and revitalization in order to ensure their dynamic adaptation to the evolving realities of international life so as to continue to play an effective role as the focal point for the management of the critical global issues of our time. Indonesia is therefore resolved to play an active and constructive role in the revitalization, restructuring and democratization of the United Nations system.

In this context, we believe that it is time to address the issue of the size and composition of the Security Council. This, we realize, should be done with circumspection, for it involves a fundamental aspect of the Organization's purposes and functions.

It will be recalled that in 1946 the United Nations had 51 Members, six of which were non-permanent members of the Council. In 1965, when the membership had grown to 113, there was a corresponding increase of the Council's non-permanent membership from six to ten. Even at that time it was

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felt that the Council lacked a representative character. And despite the fact that more than a quarter of a century has elapsed, and also despite the fact that the membership has now reached 179, there has been no comparable increase in the Council's non-permanent membership, a fact which has rendered it even more unbalanced and inequitable.

We recognize the new cooperative spirit prevailing in the Security Council which has facilitated the adoption of consensus decisions on some of the most complex and critical issues. But we also express concern at the tendency of some States to dominate the Council, to impose the will of the strong on the weak and to apply discriminatory treatment in the international community and in the United Nations. Moreover, the exercise of special powers is anachronistic and contrary to the aim of democratizing the United Nations. The increasing importance of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, which is the concern of all States and which has gained new dimensions of unprecedented variety and scope, has further underlined the need for reform and restructuring.

It was due to these overriding considerations that the Tenth Summit Meeting of the non-aligned countries, held last September, called for a review of the Council's membership with a view to reflecting the increased membership of the United Nations and promoting a more equitable and balanced representation of its Members. The resulting expansion would strengthen the Council by making it more responsive and relevant to existing realities, facilitate the participation in its work of small and medium-sized States, which constitute a majority in the Organization, and contribute to the enhancement of its credibility and moral authority. Finally, such expansion would also facilitate the accountability of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

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It has been more than a decade since the question of an expansion of the Security Council membership was inscribed on the Assembly's agenda. My delegation believes that the time has now come to review the composition of this principal organ in order to reflect today's political and economic realities. Towards the attainment of those goals, the delegation of Indonesia is a sponsor of the draft resolution on agenda item 40.

Mr. HADID (Algeria) (interpretation from French): It was 13 years ago, on 14 December 1979, that Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Guyana, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and my country took the initiative of requesting the inclusion on the agenda of the General Assembly of the item "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council".

The explanatory memorandum that accompanied that request in accordance with rule 20 of the Assembly's rules of procedure, set forth the reasons that amply justified the need to review the composition of the Security Council. The memorandum drew attention to the increase in the membership of the United Nations, which had increased from 113 at the time of the last enlargement of the Council to 152 in 1979. The memorandum also noted that that growth had not been reflected in the Council, whose membership had remained fixed at 15 since 1963.

This resulted in an increased disproportion in the representation of Member States on the Security Council in so far as in 1946 each Council member represented 4.6 Member States of the United Nations, whereas that global average had risen to 10.1 in 1979. Today the Organization has 179 Members, and the disproportion has therefore grown much more acute, since the ratio of representation is now of the order of 12 Member States to one Security Council seat.

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That disproportion causes even greater concern since it is accompanied by an inequitable distribution from the geographical standpoint and also between permanent and non-permanent members. The 1979 explanatory memorandum to which I have referred also stressed this second aspect of the question, noting that there was one non-permanent seat for 18.5 Asian countries, one for 16.3 African States, one for 14 Latin American States, one for 11 Western European and other States, and one for 10 Eastern European States. To remedy that unjust distribution, the countries that took the initiative of requesting the inclusion of the item on the agenda proposed a review of the composition of the Council with a view to providing for a more equitable and balanced representation.

It is this same requirement of equity and justice that inspires our endeavour today. To the relevant arguments in the 1979 explanatory memorandum, which are today more timely than ever, my delegation would like to add another factor related to the Security Council's role as set forth in the Charter.

At this juncture it is traditional to repeat that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security resides in the Security Council. There is no intention on anyone's part to question that fact. This does not, however, mean that we should lose sight of the overall context of the Security Council's mandate, one created by the Charter itself. In fact, in conferring on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Charter also gives the Council specific duties and obligations. Thus, paragraph 2 of Article 24 provides that:

> "In discharging these duties the Security Council shall act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations."

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Similarly, paragraph 1 of the same Article stipulates that the Security Council can only act, within the framework of its specific prerogatives, on behalf of the Members of the United Nations. Lastly, paragraph 3 of Article 24 states that the Security Council shall submit annual reports and special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration.

A reading of the three provisions as a whole - and other Charter provisions could also be invoked - clearly reveals that in delegating a certain number of specific powers to the Security Council, Member States expect in return that the Council will truly act in their behalf. It is necessary, therefore, in order for Member States to feel fully represented in the Security Council's action, that its composition be as representative as possible. One of the principal ways to improve its representativeness is an increase in its membership.

My country's Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, in his statement in the general debate at this forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, stressed

"the need to allow access to the Council for all major cultural, political and geographic groupings." (A/47/PV.14, p. 8)

In addition, the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity, meeting at Dakar in June 1992, and those of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, meeting at Jakarta in September 1992, emphasized the vital importance they attach to this question.

Objections have sometimes been raised that the enlargement of the composition of the Security Council would weaken its effectiveness. My delegation does not share that view. On the contrary, we are convinced that an enlarged Security Council, by being more representative of the diversity of

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the States Members of the United Nations, could only gain in effectiveness since its decisions would better respond to the expectation of Member States and would therefore more spontaneously and more convincingly evoke general support.

Others fear that an increase in the membership of the Council - which, it is true, requires an amendment of the Charter - would open a Pandora's box. To that, we would reply that an enlargement of the composition of the Council is in itself a modest, specific and limited measure that would entail amendments to only Articles 23 and 27 of the Charter. Clearly, that would in no way risk any uncontrollable upheaval in the organizational procedures and functioning of the United Nations. In support of this we might also recall that Articles 23 and 27 were already amended, in 1963, when the Council's composition was changed to 15 members, and that that gave rise to no disorder or disturbance in the fabric of the United Nations.

(Mr. Hadid, Algeria)

The major political developments on the international scene today provide conditions conducive to change within our Organization. Change is not, of course, an end in itself, but it is an essential means of adaptation to an evolving world. It is clearly in the best interest of all Member States to accept and take part in the changes that have been made inevitable by the quantitative and qualitative developments in the international community.

Our Organization has already embarked, in part, on this long-term undertaking whose major objective is to ensure a more democratic, more harmonious and, in the end, more effective relationship between its various organs - especially between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Some promising results, though they may still be limited, have already been achieved, especially in the economic and social spheres. Proposals, studies and ideas have come to light here and there in other spheres of activity. The Secretary-General has provided us with "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), which is now being studied. This shows that our Organization has entered a historic, dynamic stage that is naturally conducive to change and adaptation to the realities of the world today.

The Security Council cannot, it is clear, remain on the sidelines of this powerful movement of renewal, reinvigoration and rationalization of the United Nations system. A first important step could be taken now regarding the expansion of the Security Council. In my delegation's view, this question has reached, after 13 years of gestation, a point of such maturity and urgency that it can brook no further delay.

It is therefore up to all the Members of the United Nations to deal rapidly and effectively with this question in concrete terms, in accordance with the practices of consultation, in order to achieve an agreed and generally acceptable solution.

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The draft resolution on this agenda item which the Assembly will soon consider has that aim. Algeria is, of course, a sponsor of the draft resolution, as it has been of similar draft resolutions since 1979.

Mr. ZAMORA RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): In recent years, as international relations have undergone a dramatic and radical transformation, we have witnessed an unprecedented increase in the activity of the Security Council and the emergence of certain traits and tendencies in the Council that, in our view, call for the General Assembly's urgent and careful attention.

As the Council's actions have expanded into almost every region of the world, it has become clear that some of its members are striving to broaden its functions and activities, in most cases far beyond the provisions of the Charter and in many cases undermining the mandates of other United Nations organs. At the same time, the international community has watched with concern as mechanisms and practices have gradually been introduced into the Council that have been designed to transform it into a tool of the foreign policy of the great Powers, with all the pernicious consequences such mechanisms and practices have for the strict, impartial and non-selective application of the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs - principles that constitute, without any doubt, the cornerstone of our Organization and its daily activities.

Another source of concern for most countries is the fact that special powers still prevail in the Council - as can be seen in the antiquated institution of the veto and the existence of the category of permanent member - in an era in which the democratization of international relations and

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their regulating organs, such as the United Nations, should necessarily be taking shape.

For all those reasons, the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, when they gathered not long ago in Jakarta, Indonesia, and manifested their determination to impede, through the democratization of the United Nations, the perpetuation of the existing disparities between nations by the creation of new centres of privilege,

> "expressed their concern over the tendency of some States to dominate the Council, which could transform it into an institution for the imposition of the will of the strong on the weak, and reaffirmed that all nations and States, large or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, have a right to full independence and sovereign equality in international relations."

Similarly, at the Tenth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries it was solemnly declared that

> "The power of veto on which the dominant and exclusive role of the permanent members of the Council is based runs counter to the objective of democratizing the United Nations and should therefore be reviewed in conformity with the reform of the United Nations with a view to achieving greater democratization and transparency in the work of all the organs of the Organization."

At the same time, it was requested

> "that the number of members of the Council be modified to reflect the increase in the membership of the United Nations and promote a more just and balanced representation of the members of that institution."

In the light of today's realities and the positions taken by the non-aligned countries, we are convinced that the subject we are considering

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today, though it may not cover all the important features of the Security Council that need to be dealt with urgently by the General Assembly, has taken on new importance and timeliness.

The number of Council members, the existence of the category of permanent member and the veto mechanism, inter alia, respond to situations that have nothing to do with present-day realities. The fact that our Organization has more than tripled in size in recent decades and that interests have multiplied within it, that the centres of power have shifted through the years and that the need to democratize international organizations has become more and more imperative, makes clear the anachronistic nature of the institutions that continue to hold sway over the Council without justification.

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Can anyone now seriously justify the fact that there are States that have the prerogative of belonging eternally to a given body, as if by divine right? Can anyone give a convincing reason why, in today's world, there should be States that have special powers giving them primacy over the rest, as if the principle of sovereign equality of States did not exist or were not now more valid than ever? Can anyone maintain that it is fair that, while our Organization has grown threefold, the number of members of one of its main organs has remained the same? Can anyone seriously claim that perpetuation of this situation benefits the international community as a whole? Whom does the status quo benefit - the majority of the nations of the world, or the very small group of countries, rich and powerful as they are, that defend the status quo?

It is clear that it will not be easy to change this situation. The Charter is designed in such a way that it is in the hands, as it were, of that small group of countries that have special powers to accept or reject amendments that would put an end to such an unjust and anomalous situation. However, we believe that it is now time to begin to work seriously and resolutely, bearing in mind the interests of all the nations represented in our Organization, to correct this situation.

The item we are considering today appeared in the General Assembly's programme of work in 1979 for the first time. Since then - for 12 years now - its consideration has been postponed again and again. We feel that this item, together with all the other elements that make up the overall pattern of work of the Security Council, should this year be the subject of an in-depth analysis that will result in action making possible the beginning of a process of radical reform of the Council.

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We note in particular that in recent years emphasis has been placed on restructuring of the General Assembly, the Secretariat, the economic and social sectors and other bodies of our institution and aspects of its work, but that nothing has been done with respect to the Security Council. Even the modest steps that some delegations, including mine, have tried to take in the Council itself for the purpose, at least, of making its methods of work more transparent and enabling the General Assembly to exercise the responsibilities laid down in the Charter have been frustrated to a great extent by the resistance of precisely those who have special powers and levels of representation in this body.

We feel that if we are to give a new direction to the Security Council, and new meaning to its work, it is vital, in present conditions, that we work in two directions.

First, through our daily work in the United Nations we should prevent the Security Council from violating its mandate under the Charter by assuming functions that do not belong to it and would tend to turn it into an increasingly interventionist body, to the basic detriment of the sovereign rights of third-world nations.

Secondly, it is our duty to work, in the light of Article 24 of the Charter, according to which the Security Council acts on our behalf - on behalf of all the Members of the Organization - and should report to the General Assembly on its activities, for gradual progress towards increasing the number of members of the Council in such a way as to reflect fairly the present membership of the United Nations; to ensure that the Council's transparency is guaranteed, both with respect to its annual report to the General Assembly and in its daily work; to redefine the category of permanent

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member, if we should decide to continue it; and to eliminate the special powers which, like the veto, are an unacceptable violation of the democratization that should be established without delay in all international institutions.

We have the appropriate mechanisms to achieve this, in the context of both this agenda item and agenda item 11 concerning the Security Council's report to the General Assembly. But perhaps the ideal course would be the introduction of a new item that would make possible full examination of the Council, including its membership and the categories of its members, its structure, its mechanisms and its means of operating.

We can assure the Assembly that we are prepared to make our modest contribution to a Security Council reform exercise which is not only necessary but crucial and which we feel is the urgent duty of the General Assembly. That is why we welcome the circulation, by the delegation of India, of a draft resolution that we fully support.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): For the past four decades the global rivalry between two permanent members of the Security Council virtually paralysed the ability of the Council to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to it under the Charter. With the end of the cold war, the Security Council has displayed the capacity to play a central role in the maintenance of international peace and security, although its responses have not been either uniform or consistent.

Pakistan welcomes the general desire that is evident among United Nations Members to enable the Security Council to discharge its primary responsibility in the field of international peace and security. My delegation shares the desire to strengthen the role of the Security Council as part of the endeavour to restructure and invigorate the United Nations.

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

When the United Nations was established, its membership numbered only 51 States. The Security Council then consisted of 11 members. In 1963 the Council was enlarged to its present size of 15 members by adding four non-permanent members. At that time the membership of the United Nations was 113 States. Since then the United Nations membership has grown to 179 States. This increase in the membership must find greater reflection in the Security Council. Moreover, the change in the geographical composition of the Organization and the larger number of small and medium-sized States should also be reflected appropriately in the Council's composition.

It is most relevant that, in considering the question of equitable representation on and increased membership of the Security Council, we should bear in mind the position taken on the issue by the Non-Aligned Movement, whose members constitute a majority of the States Members of the United Nations. The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries viewed the issue of Security Council membership in the context of measures to strengthen and democratize the United Nations.

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

Paragraph 30 of Chapter II of the Final Document of the Jakarta conference states, inter alia:

"They [the Heads of State or Government] expressed their determination to participate constructively in the process of adaptation and reform in the firm conviction that the United Nations is an indispensable forum to be supported and strengthened. Yet democratization of the international political and economic institutions inherent in such a process continues to be hampered by those who seek to preserve their privileged positions of power. The democratization of the United Nations and its bodies should avoid perpetuating the current inequities by creating new centres of privilege and be pursued in the spirit of the sovereign equality of all States. They appealed to the major States to accept this inevitable process in the broader interests of all mankind."

Paragraph 32 of the same chapter states, inter alia:

"They [the Heads of State or Government] were of the view that the veto powers which guarantee an exclusive and dominant role for the permanent members of the Council are contrary to the aim of democratizing the United Nations and must, therefore, be reviewed in line with the reform of the United Nations aimed at bringing about greater democratization and transparency in the work of all United Nations bodies. They also called for a review of the membership of the United Nations and promoting a more equitable and balanced representation of the Members of the United Nations."

My delegation considers that, in consonance with the position of the non-aligned countries, any decision on the question of equitable and increased

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membership of the Security Council will have to conform to the following criteria: first, it should increase the Council's representative character; secondly, it should enhance the Council's ability to discharge its responsibilities under the Charter; thirdly, it should promote greater democratization in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality of States; fourthly, it should not enlarge the existing inequalities in the rights and privileges of Member States of the United Nations; fifthly, it should be compatible with the overall measures to restructure and strengthen the United Nations in various areas; and, sixthly, it should be achieved through consensus and agreement among the Member States of the United Nations.

Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria): When Nigeria, along with nine other Member States, requested the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the thirty-fourth session of the Assembly, there were compelling reasons which justified an examination of equitable representation on, and increase in the membership of, the Security Council. Today, almost 14 years later, those reasons have become even more compelling and have assumed a greater urgency. As the United Nations approaches its fiftieth anniversary in the wake of unprecedented changes in the international scene over the last two years, we believe that the time has now come for the General Assembly to give positive consideration to this agenda item without any further procrastination.

In all our previous statements on this agenda item Nigeria has consistently pointed out the tremendous changes which have taken place in the world since 1945, when the United Nations was established. Its membership has grown from the initial 51 countries to 179 Member States today, with 13 new Members joining the Organization in the last year alone. The Security Council started with five permanent and six non-permanent members - that is, 11 out of

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a total membership of 51 States in 1946. In 1963 the Council was expanded by adding four non-permanent seats, resulting in 15 members out of an increased United Nations membership of 113 States. The Council has maintained the same number of 15, even though the total membership of the Organization has now increased to 179.

But more important than the ratio of members of the Council vis-à-vis the total membership of the Organization is the issue of representation, or in the words of the Charter "equitable geographical distribution" of that representation. Currently Africa, with 51 Member States, has three seats on the Council, all of them non-permanent. Asia, with 43 Member States, has two non-permanent seats and one permanent seat. Latin America and the Caribbean States have a total of 34 Member States, which are represented by two non-permanent seats in the Council. Eastern Europe, with 10 Member States, has two seats, one permanent and the other non-permanent. The Group of Western European and Other States total 24 Member States, represented by a total of five seats, three of them permanent. The remaining 16 Member States are yet to be classified in specific regional groups. The imbalance inherent in this present distribution becomes more glaring when it is realized that the African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean States account for a combined population of 3.8 billion as compared with 906 million in Europe, both Eastern and Western Europe, and North America.

These issues of numbers and distribution are important in themselves, but they assume further significance when taken in the context of the monumental changes which are occurring in the world. A new world order is being established which we hope, in the words of our President, will be "collectively defined, collectively designed and collectively defended". We

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envisage this to be a new order which will replace confrontation with consensus and conflict with cooperation. We have already started seeing the germination of this new world order in the collaborative approach of regional arrangements in cooperation with the United Nations to address issues which constitute threats to international or regional peace and security. One recalls with a sense of optimism the efforts of such regional arrangements towards resolving conflicts in Yugoslavia, Cambodia, Central America and many parts of Africa, particularly in Somalia and Liberia.

But our optimism is sometimes tempered with apprehension when we consider, for example, the urgency with which decisions were made in the Security Council on the territories of the former Yugoslavia as compared with the case of Somalia. There are feelings in some quarters that the Security Council tends to act expeditiously on issues where the permanent members have direct interests. Hence there are doubts in such quarters as to whether they can rely on the Council as presently constituted to protect the interests of smaller and less powerful countries.

At this period, when the United Nations - especially the Security Council - is assuming a pre-eminent role in world affairs, it is essential that the Security Council should reflect equitable representation of all the regions of the world. That will enhance its credibility, its legitimacy and its moral authority as the sole organ endowed with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

In our statement to the Assembly on this item last year we raised a number of questions. Those questions are still valid even though they have remained largely unanswered. It was therefore with keen interest that we heard many delegations, including those of some prominent countries, mention this issue in their statements during the general debate in plenary meetings of the Assembly. Today many speakers have eloquently presented the case for the expansion of the Security Council, making it more equitably representative and also more democratic. Of all the organs and other bodies of the United Nations the Security Council remains the least responsive to global changes; yet it is the pre-eminent body. Its structure remains the least democratic and representative; yet it is the body which many people look to for support and assistance in their quest for democracy and freedom from oppression and aggression. The United Nations cannot be a credible force in the promotion of democracy throughout the world if it does not democratize itself and all its principal organs.

It was in this context that the President of Nigeria, in his address to the General Assembly last year, remarked that

> "The logic of democracy cannot be confined within the borders of individual States, but must, of necessity, be applicable to the operation of international organizations. It is therefore our considered opinion that there is need to expand the membership of the Security Council and to admit additional permanent members representing all the regions of the world." (A/46/PV.22, p. 54-55)

In the same vein, the Nigerian Foreign Minister, in his statement during the general debate this year, reiterated that

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

"The need to increase the number of permanent seats in the Security Council is ... an idea whose time has come. Therefore, it should be a matter of principle for the international community that Africa must not continue to be a region without representation in the permanent membership of the Security Council". (A/47/PV.19, p. 83)

We believe that it is essential that the General Assembly move from making statements and start to consider this issue positively, by initiating some concrete action during this session of the General Assembly. We are therefore willing to work with other delegations with a view to presenting a draft resolution on this item, which we hope will be adopted by consensus before this session adjourns.

Momentous changes are rapidly taking place in the world. To quote the late President John F. Kennedy, when he addressed the General Assembly in September 1963,

"The United Nations cannot survive as a static Organization. Its obligations are increasing as well as its size. Its Charter must be changed as well as its customs. The authors of that Charter did not intend that it be frozen in perpetuity." (Official Records of the General Assembly, Eighteenth Session, Verbatim records, 1209th plenary meeting, para. 74)

Those words are as true and relevant today as they were almost 30 years ago.

Mr. BIEGMAN (Netherlands): The Security Council rightly is the focus of world attention nowadays. This new interest has given fresh impetus to the discussion on the Council's membership, and this was reflected during the general debate of the current session of the General Assembly. Many speakers referred to the issue and we look forward to the compilation of the

(Mr. Biegman, Netherlands)

respective positions of the Member States. This could be a useful basis for further discussion.

In his statement at this session of the General Assembly the Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, also addressed the issue of the Council's membership. Let me refer to his words:

> "The achievements of the Council in terms of effective leadership and decision-making, particularly during the last two years, need not be elaborated upon. Supporters of the maintenance of its current composition can hence, with some justification, argue that there is no need to change a winning team" (A/47/PV.6, p. 71)

and that the present system of ten rotating members is sufficient. He added:

> "The critics of the status quo argue that the Council's present composition is a reflection of the balance of power of days gone by. This leaves us with a dilemma because both sides have a point.
>
> "Important changes have taken place in international relations. The number of Member States has increased enormously since the enlargement of the Council in 1963. The Charter specifies in Article 24 that the Council acts on behalf of all Members. This implies that the Council should be, to a certain degree, representative of the international community. Were the Council to become an exclusive club disconnected [or perceived to be disconnected] from the United Nations membership as a whole, this might tend to undermine its authority and diminish its effectiveness." (A/47/PV.6, p. 71)

The Secretary-General rightly observes in chapter X of "An Agenda for Peace" that agreement among the permanent members must have the deeper support of the other members of the Council and, more widely, the membership of the

(Mr. Biegman, Netherlands)

Assembly if the Council's decisions are to be effective and to endure (A/47/277, para. 78). So what are we to do when faced with the question of the Council's effectiveness on the one hand and its representativeness on the other?

The Netherlands has already suggested some ideas for a possible solution to this question. Perhaps the severing of the automatic link between permanent membership of the Council and the right of veto would be an option. Alternatively, the creation of semi-permanent membership of the Security Council could be contemplated. This membership would apply to a certain category of important States for a period of five to seven years, possibly without the right of veto. The Secretary-General made some observations to this effect earlier this year.

To determine which countries would be eligible for this type of membership it seems that two criteria are relevant: the political weight of the country concerned, and the degree to which its membership would contribute to a more equitable geographical distribution of the Council's composition. In view of the Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security it would appear to me that those two elements should be carefully balanced.

The discussion about the effectiveness and representativeness of the Security Council should however not be concentrated only upon the question of its composition. Strengthening the role of the Secretary-General and more active use of the possibility of allowing non-members of the Council to participate in its deliberations in cases where the interests of those countries are directly concerned are options worth considering in order further to improve its functioning. Furthermore, collaboration between the

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Council and regional organizations and arrangements, based on Chapter VIII of the Charter, in order to ensure international peace and security is a promising area which needs to be looked into in more detail.

Nor should the discussion about the composition of the Security Council be separated from the deliberations on wider aspects of the role of the United Nations. The Organization has gained considerable momentum since the cold war ended. The Secretary-General put forward a wealth of ideas in "An Agenda for Peace" to enhance the effectiveness and capability of the United Nations in regard to maintaining international peace and security. The wish to reflect on the composition of the Security Council should not be an objective in itself - legitimate as it may be - but should be seen in the wider context of preserving and improving the capacity of the United Nations for conflict resolution and peacemaking.

(Mr. Biegman, Netherlands)

The Netherlands welcomes a broad international discussion on the Security Council. This discussion is by its very nature a sensitive and highly political one. Perhaps the year 1995 would be an appropriate moment to achieve consensus. For now, the basis for discussion should be that changes should not be ruled out but must ensure the continued effectiveness of the Council, for the benefit of the Organization and of mankind as a whole.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 40. Action on a draft resolution to be submitted under this item will be taken at a later date, to be announced in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.